

¶10.9 WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER
AGAINST THE CONFERENCE REPORT ON
H.R. 2546

Mr. LINDER, by direction of the Committee on Rules, reported (Rept. No. 104-456) the resolution (H. Res. 351) waiving points of order during consideration of the bill (H.R. 2546) making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against the revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes.

When said resolution and report were referred to the House Calendar and ordered printed.

¶10.10 AUTHORIZING SPEAKER TO
DECLARE RECESSES

Mr. LINDER, by direction of the Committee on Rules, reported (Rept. No. 104-457) the resolution (H. Res. 352) authorizing the Speaker to declare recesses subject to the call of the Chair from February 2, 1996, through February 26, 1996.

When said resolution and report were referred to the House Calendar and ordered printed.

¶10.11 PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mrs. MINK rose to a question of the privileges of the House and submitted the following resolution (H. Res. 350):

Whereas virtually every nation in the world has adhered to a moratorium on nuclear tests since September 1992;

Whereas, on June 13, 1995, President Jacques Chirac of France ended his nation's adherence to the moratorium by ordering a series of nuclear tests in the South Pacific;

Whereas France has since conducted six nuclear tests on the Pacific atolls of Moruroa and Fangataufa in French Polynesia;

Whereas France has acknowledged that radioactive materials from some of the tests have leaked into the ocean;

Whereas, as a result of the tests, the people of the Pacific are extremely concerned about the health and safety of those who live near the test sites, as well as the adverse environmental effects of the tests on the region;

Whereas, in conducting the tests, France has callously ignored world-wide protests and global concern;

Whereas the United States is one of 167 nations that have objected to the tests;

Whereas the tests are inconsistent with the "Principles and Objectives for Disarmament", as adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

Whereas, in proceeding with the tests, France has acted contrary to the commitment of the international community to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the moratorium on nuclear testing;

Whereas the President of France, Jacques Chirac, is scheduled to appear before a joint meeting of the Congress on February 1, 1996; and

Whereas, in light of the tests, the appearance of the President of France before the Congress violates the dignity and integrity of the proceedings of the House: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That, by reason of the recent nuclear tests conducted by France in the South Pacific, the Speaker of the House shall take such action as may be necessary to withdraw the invitation to the President of France,

Jacques Chirac, to address a joint meeting of the Congress, as scheduled to occur on February 1, 1996.

SEC. 2. On and after the date on which this resolution is agreed to, the Speaker of the House may not agree to the appearance before a joint meeting of the Congress by any head of state or head of government whose nation conducts nuclear tests.

Mrs. MINK was recognized to speak and said:

"Mr. Speaker, I offer this question of the privileges of the House because I believe that the invitation to President Jacques Chirac to address the joint session of the Congress on February 1, 1996 violates the integrity of the House.

"Despite world wide objection to the resumption of nuclear tests, President Chirac proceeded with callous disregard to the concerns and consequences of his actions.

"The House of Representatives Chambers must be reserved to those individuals whose actions and political courage bring dignity to this institutional. Invitations to address joint sessions are reserved to those persons who have demonstrated their leadership and character as deserving of honor and reverence.

"I believe that many Members of Congress are as offended as I am by the idea of President Chirac coming to this Chamber to address this Nation. After refusing to listen to the pleas of hundreds of nations, and in particular the people of the Pacific rim, why should the Congress afford him a podium from which to advance his unwelcome views?

"This offense is not just against the people of French Polynesia. It is an offense against all the people of the world who believed that there would be an end to the nuclear arms race. For France to resume nuclear tests in the Pacific after previously announcing an end to these tests, is a moral travesty that shakes the very foundation of world governments.

"For France to argue that they needed to do these tests to ensure the reliability of their nuclear arsenal is to state that the French Government has repudiated the basis of the Test Ban Treaty which is that nuclear war is impossible and that no government should be planning for such an inevitability.

"If those nations who possess the nuclear bomb are allowed with opprobrium to re-test their arsenal, then the appeal to others not to seek nuclear capability is an empty gesture at best. At a critical time when we want to curb the nuclear adventures in China and other countries, how do we justify playing host to a Western Power who has already conducted 192 tests, most of them in the Pacific, 140 of them underground and yet insisted that it needed 8 more tests to prove its reliability, and to perfect its computer based simulation technology.

"Sadly President Chirac's decision opens the way for other nations to squander our precious environment for their own purposes. Why is France's national security of greater importance than other nations?

"The sixth and last nuclear blast that was set off by the French Government on January 27, 1996, in Fangataufa Atoll in French Polynesia had the equivalency to 120,000 tons of TNT, more than six times the Hiroshima bomb.

"This defiance of international policy, and deliberate renunciation of their own government's prior announcement of a test ban moratorium must not be received by this Chamber with regular order.

"On the contrary, I believe, as I have stated in this resolution that the invitation should be withdrawn on the basis that his presence in this Chamber would constitute approval of his conduct in this regard.

"Other than this resolution we had no opportunity to express our disapproval of this invitation. I urge this House to approve this resolution and serve notice to the world of our solemn adherence to a nuclear free world."

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia was recognized to speak and said:

"Mr. Speaker, I want to join with my colleagues to strongly protest France's actions in the South Pacific. I am pleased that France has stopped testing its nuclear weapons. But I must say—it is too late. The damage has been done.

"France ignored the pleas of the governments and people of the South Pacific and throughout the world. We live on this planet together. We share its bounty. These are our oceans, our land, our people. We must respect each other.

"President Chirac did not listen to the groans and moans, the hopes, the dreams and the aspirations of those who are longing for a planet free of nuclear waste, free of nuclear destruction, free of nuclear poison. This man—this President of France and his government—refused to listen to the community of nations.

"And now, he wants to come to our house. To the people's house. President Chirac, our people do not support nuclear testing. Our people do not support radiation in the waters. Our people do not support a government that ignores the community of nations.

"Six times, France has poisoned our earth. Six times, nuclear poison has seeped into the waters of this little planet. This poison remains with each and every one of us.

"If France truly wants to atone for its wrongs, they must apologize to the people of the South Pacific. They must join with them to right the wrongs, to help heal the environment, to help heal the hurt.

"As France's actions demonstrate, nuclear testing should be banned from this planet forever. We must never again engage in this desolate deed. It is time to evolve to another level, to a better world where we lay down the tools of poison and destruction and respect the community of nations.

"Nuclear testing is obsolete. Nuclear testing is evil. To paraphrase the words